

Session 12-05, a Special Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Bumpo Bremicker at 5:38 p.m. on April 10, 2012 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

**PRESENT:** COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, BREMICKER, BELL  
AND LILLIBRIDGE

**STAFF:** CITY MANAGER WALT WREDE  
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR CAREY MEYER  
PLANNING TECHNICIAN JULIE ENGBRETSSEN  
RECREATION SPECIALIST MIKE ILLG  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK I RENEE KRAUSE

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Bremicker called for a motion to approve the agenda.

LILLIBRIDGE/ARCHIBALD – MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** *(Minutes are approved during Regular Meetings Only)*

There were no minutes for approval.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Chair Bremicker asked for public comment. He acknowledged Miranda Weiss and she was here to see how the discussion goes. Chair Bremicker said they would be willing to give her 10 minutes to address the commission.

Ms. Weiss provided an update on the HoPP Build Week that is scheduled to start May 27, 2012. She has met with the owner of an Anchorage sawmill who has offered to provide the wood fiber for the playground. Carlisle has agreed to donate the trucking of the fiber materials which amounts to 204,000 pounds. Horizon has come forward with a donation to move the playground equipment.

Ms. Weiss brought forward a new idea to help contribute to the proposed day use area adjacent to the playground they have found that they would have \$5000 towards sod, topsoil and will have the labor and trees available to plant in that area if the Commission would agree to provide matching funds to make this happen at the same time.

Commissioner Lowney commented that there is a gentleman who was involved in the original landscape design concept presented in the Master Plan, his name is Bill Evans. He currently works for State Parks. She believed that it would be beneficial to invite him to the April 19, 2012 meeting as a Visitor to get his input.

Ms. Weiss commented that there was an opportunity to get this done faster and just schedule a meeting with the gentleman and he can put a design together and they can agree to get it done.

Discussion evolved into what can be done and what is needed to improve that proposed day use area. Mr. Wrede commented that if the commission came up with recommendations on what they would like to see done with that area it would be very helpful. Some of the points made were as follows:

- Wonderful to dove-tail with the playground it would be next to impossible to get the plan and design in time.
- getting this area ready for summer would be beneficial for the summer
- City Administration has second thoughts to removal of the Red Shed and that with modifications it would have value to the area as additional shelter.
- Comments received from the older residents on memories about the Red Shed.
- Possible modifications to the building to make it useful
- Process to determine what the area would require in regards to drainage, grade, etc.
- Previous drainage improvements may make the area dry and no additional measures needed with the exception of the low area.
- Expending funds just to realize at later date that those improvements have to be removed.

Chair Bremicker asked if Mr. Meyer can provide more concrete information on the grades and feasibility of improvements to that area for the next meeting. Mr. Meyer was non-committal.

Commissioner Lillibridge did not want to entertain any discussion on the road relocation and focus on the day use, plan for the Woodard Creek trail and adjacent area tonight.

Discussion then focused on the grades in the proposed day use area, the \$50,000 for engineering which includes the road, contracting for a 35% design, and responsible use of the \$90,000 for the day use improvements.

It was noted that if you do not do the required preliminary work such as grades, surveys, etc. before performing any additional improvements even laying sod before getting this done may be a waste of money.

Next clarification was received on the most up to date playground design which was been modified greatly since last presented to the Commissioners. In the area proposed as day use nothing is going in besides a sandbox.

City Manager Wrede brought to the commissioner's attention the reduction in the day use area with the parking concept in the master plan and believed that the commission should consider this design in their deliberations. He confirmed for the commission that it is a concept plan and can be changed without Council approval. Comments followed from the commissioners and staff regarding:

- Use of the area for large events
- keeping all improvements north of the restrooms
- use some funds to make the needed improvements to the red shed
- Additional bar-b-que grills are needed
- Parking on top of the playground loses great open green space
- Safety issues with the current parking conditions
- Removal of the islands in the parking design
- The lower you go the more fill will be required and grades will change
- use hydroseeding instead of sod
- notice the council on the changes through administrative memorandum

Commissioner Lowney asked when the commission can receive the engineering report on what would be the next area to improve or should they focus their efforts on the periphery with trails and such. She requested some direction from Mr. Meyer and Mr. Wrede.

Mr. Meyer responded with using the \$50,000 to achieve 35% Design documents which will let the commission know what areas they should maybe focus on and it may be available at the end of summer.

Ms. Engebretsen commented on the proposed trail and recommended having a meeting at the location in June so they can see what is being proposed for the area. Details will come about.

Mr. Wrede departed the meeting at 6:35 p.m. for another meeting.

Commissioner Brann offered a few suggestions regarding trail locations and construction throughout the park and campground area to tie all areas together. Ms. Engebretsen stated that there is some decisions that need to be determined within areas of the park before you can make recommendations on the trails. But the commission is getting there.

Mr. Meyer commented that they need to find a balance on what items they can build and to spend the funding in a responsible way and he encouraged the commission not to give up on receiving funding for the road and the playground can help push the other phases forward.

Some additional items of discussion and points made were as follows:

- The time it takes to complete a project.
- Getting the biggest bang for the buck
- Staying within the Master Plan as approved
- Living with some discomfort as everything gets done
- Scope of Work for the Northern Parking Improvements
- Drainage
- Parking or Day Use
- Safety Issues
- Redesign the parking lot in Concept B2 and move actually parking towards the creek.
- Area adjacent to playground to be designated day use and improve the aesthetics around the playground this summer.
- Engineering is not going to be done until later this summer
- No improvements in the area adjacent to the playground at the same time as the playground build week there is not enough time and too many questions regarding the area.
- The parking improvements will be conducted after Labor Day this year.
- Inspection of Red Shed by Structural Engineer for integrity

It is pushing it to get all of that work done at the same time that it would be in the best interest to get the design work completed and then have it for next summer. Public Works does not have the staff and has numerous projects already committed for this summer and although it is a great idea it was agreed by the majority that it would be too much being done in one area.

There was a brief dialogue on placement of materials and creation of the berms on the west side of the day use area.

Commissioner Bell asked if Ms. Weiss could quantify her resources for the commission and she could not do that she could state that they could put up \$5000 towards sod, shed, landscaping, etc. They have this available but have scaled back their project. She feels that they could put some people, equipment and funding behind the landscaping of the adjacent day use area. She did not want to expand to another area.

The commissioners reviewed the planned day use area with the drawings and maps provided with Ms. Weiss explaining the changes to the playground design for the commissioners. She noted that the location of the sandbox.

Who will make the decision on the red shed and some of the day use money can be used on that? Staff responded that the Commission can make a recommendation through memorandum. No final decision has been made at this time. Upon review of the structure it was determined that it would be added value to the park.

LOWNEY/LILLIBRIDGE - RECOMMENDATION TO CONTINUE RESEARCH ON THE RED SHED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF REPURPOSING IT FOR USE WITHIN THE EXISTING LOCATION AND INVITE MR. EVANS TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE COST ESTIMATE ON LANDSCAPING THE PROPOSED DAY USE FOR THE APRIL 19, 2012 REGULAR MEETING.

There was further discussion on the status of the red shed and reconsideration of removal from the park. It was noted that the shed has been already given to the Wooden Boat Society, but assurance was given that it can be given back to the city. It was noted that the stability, durability and integrity of the red shed should be verified for the purpose of possible liability issues.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Bremicker noted that they will be discussing this further and if there was any additional information or discussion required now.

Commissioner Archibald requested a structural integrity report on the red shed and Chair Bremicker inquired when this could be accomplished and reported back to the commission. Mr. Meyer reported that he will be meeting with Bill Nelson soon on the Crittenden LID and he can bring him to look at the building when he comes down and get his professional opinion. No time frame was given on when they would be meeting.

Commissioner Brann wanted to discuss a related topic regarding safety issues with traffic on the park road and referencing the map suggested a remedy to dissuade speeders on the park road using speed bumps and signage establishing crosswalks.

Further discussion on speed bumps ensued and Mr. Meyer stated that he was not in favor of installing speed bumps since people avoid them at most costs. Most will obey, but signage should be placed to counteract driver's response to speed bumps. It was confirmed that the road was not an official road and the city could pretty much do what they felt was best.

LOWNEY/BRANN – MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT THEY INSTALL THREE SPEED BUMPS AND SIGNAGE ON THE PARK ROAD.

Discussion ensued on speed bumps and signage.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Ms. Weiss requested the commissioners to revisit her earlier proposal regarding the day use area as she had to leave and the remaining items did not pertain to her.

It was agreed to postpone a decision until the meeting next week.

Commissioner Lillibridge reiterated again that she would not be at the meeting next week but wanted it on record that she voted in favor of the proposal presented by Ms. Weiss.

## **VISITORS**

There were no visitors scheduled.

## **RECONSIDERATION**

There were no items scheduled for reconsideration.

## **STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS**

A. Memorandum dated April 5, 2012 Re HART Funding for Karen Hornaday Park Improvements and Budget Expenditures to Date

Chair Bremicker read the title into the record and noted that they really jumped around a bit. Ms. Krause noted that this was provided by Ms. Engebretsen who will be returning as staff for the commission. Ms. Krause referenced the page in the packet showing how the funds have been allocated and expended to date.

There was a brief discussion on how the budget is allocated.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

No public hearings were scheduled.

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

There were no Pending Business items to address.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Karen Hornaday Park – Where Do We go From Here Now?

1. A Discussion on the Next Steps and Additional Funding for Recommendations Outlined in the Master Plan
2. How are the Recent Improvements Approved by Council to be Implemented and When?
3. Is the \$50,000 Allocated for Preliminary Engineering in Ordinance 11-22 Expended?

B. Overview of Maps of Karen Hornaday Park

1. What Trails? Which Sections? How can they be funded?

A discussion was also entertained on accessing HART funds for trails within the park proper. It was noted that having a good plan was instrumental in taking advantage of those funding opportunities; accessibility to the park via trails was very limited and it needs to be a focus of the commission.

Discussion and clarification on Woodard Creek; fill placement; erosion and storm mitigation; and placement of the proposed Woodard Creek Bridge followed.

Commissioner Lowney commented that she wanted to know what user group has not been accommodated through trails and she believes this is a critical component and would make the park complete in its design.

Discussion was next centered on the Campground and Host Program. Ms. Krause relayed a conversation on the goal that Ms. Otteson was hoping to have a host starting mid-June but there were details to work out such as advertising the opportunity. Some of the duties of the host would be minor maintenance, information, reporting of any suspicious characters, etc. The Host Program is a hope to deter vandalism. The commissioners had a brief discussion on any minor improvements to improve the campgrounds, sites, etc. The commissioners reviewed the recommendations in Master Plan and had questions on such items as bear proof dumpsters, clearing campsites, recycling efforts.

LOWNEY/BRANN – MOVED TO PROVIDE RECYCLING CONTAINERS FOR THE CAMPERS AND ASSIST CITY STAFF IN DISPOSING THE COLLECTED RECYCLING.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Further comments and questions on the campground hosts and the duties they will be required in exchange for the free campsite. It was outlined in the program approved by council. Mr. Meyer commented that in listening to the discussion he is reminded of the limited budget that Parks & Rec has and they have a lot of parks with needs and he believes that there is the talent and tools to make signage but funds are questionable. He further commented on the available labor and duties that personnel and summer temporary staff will be required to complete.

There was a brief comment on one of the goals was coordinate uniform signage for parks and recreation and the adopt a park and trail program that is now available; clean up this spring for the park.

Commissioner Lowney requested this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Brann provided some details on the Adopt a Park and the Rotary Club adopting Ben Walters Park and what is planned to be completed this year.

Commissioner Lowney requested consideration of connection to Reber trail to Karen Hornaday along Fairview so that people do not have to walk on the road which is becoming quite dangerous to walk. Discussion and recommendation on setting this a priority to connect Reber trail to the park and using the map showed where a proposed trail could be placed.

Ms. Krause stated that the commission could suggest this to Julie to include in the annual review of proposed trail projects and maybe even qualify for HART program.

The commissioners thanked Mr. Meyer for coming and providing the information that has assisted them in making their decisions.

Commissioner Archibald would like to look into and revisit the Land Trade idea and would like to keep this on the radar. Ms. Krause stated that she could ask the City Manager if there is any new information or developments on this topic.

Commissioner Lowney requested that a Master Plan review be on the agenda for the November meeting.

Commissioner Lillibridge reported receiving good compliments from Council members. There was a request to have a BBQ pit big enough for a pig roast.

### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

A. Strategic Plan 2012

B. Commission Annual Calendar 2012

There was no discussion on the informational materials.

### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

There were no comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL MEMBER** (if one is assigned)

There were no City Council members present.

**COMMENTS OF STAFF MEMBERS**

Ms. Krause welcomed Commissioner Bell and inquired if he had roller skates as the commission goes very fast and has lots of items on their agenda. Ms. Krause responded to inquiry about the information pamphlet and stated if the information is collected it can be formatted into a tri-fold and if the commissioners volunteered to fold them she can print up several hundred in a matter of minutes. She clarified that there are still two openings on the commission and that Mr. Bell's term will expire in October. Park Day will be on May agenda.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Brann welcomed Lars; commented on the ownership issue for Mariner Park and would like to have that verified. He said this issue keeps going back and forth and believes someone in this state knows the ownership of the land. He thanked Ms. Krause for all her help and having the food was a really nice treat.

Commissioner Lillibridge lobbied the Commissioners to donate for a picket at the Karen Hornaday Park. She opined that with all their efforts it was important that they should have a picket with Parks & Rec Commission on it and for \$50 it was a worthy cause. She reminded the commissioners that she would be absent from the next regular meeting. She stated that Mr. Meyer informed her that the relocation of the entrance is not going to happen because there is a question on who owns the park, still in discussion and she welcomed Lars Bell to the commission.

Commissioner Archibald commented spend money wisely, welcomed Lars to the commission and he will be here for the meeting but not the May meeting.

Commissioner Lowney requested the best method to contact Ms. Otteson on the signage. She is thrilled that Lars is on the commission. She felt that this commission is doing a great job and if you look at the Strategic Plan, they are kicking butt in getting things done but where they are short on is the town center park item and she believes that they should start working on that; another one is spinning their wheels on the Parks and Rec Budget/department and start a discussion on that, this has been brought up several times by Mike Illg and the City Manager too. The last thing is an information brochure and working on that item too. She would like to have this ready for this summer. She asked about the Information Kiosk for the Park.

A brief update was provided on installation of the kiosk and what may be posted on it included the Master Plan, current improvements scheduled and upcoming events at the park also. It will be installed as soon as feasible.

Commissioner Bell thanked the commission for the welcome it was a lot to take in at one time. He is willing to step in where needed on any of the committees also and is looking forward to working with everyone. He provided just a brief synopsis on himself.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Bremicker thanked the commissioners for coming and their hard work; he welcomed Lars Bell and appreciated his interest in serving on the commission. Chair Bremicker believes they accomplished a lot at this meeting and maybe more meetings similar to this one should be considered.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission Chair Bremicker adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m. The next regular meeting is THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers.

---

RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

---

Approved: